

The Wall Street Girl

By FREDERICK ORIN BARTLETT

Illustration by George E. Wolfe

DON did not receive Miss Winthrop's letter until the following evening. He had dropped into the club to join Wadsworth in a brace,—a habit he had drifted into this last month,—and opened the envelop with indifferent interest, expecting a tailor's announcement. He caught his breath at the first line, and then read the letter through some five times. Wadsworth, who was waiting politely, grew impatient.

"If you're trying to learn that by heart—" he began.

Don thrust the letter into his pocket.

"I beg your pardon," he apologized.

"It—it was rather important."

They sat down in the lounge.

"What's yours?" inquired Wadsworth, as in response to a bell a page came up.

"A little French vichy," answered Don.

"Oh, have a real drink," Wadsworth urged.

"I think I'd better not to-night," answered Don.

Wadsworth ordered a cocktail for himself.

"How's the market to-day?" he inquired. He always inquired how the market was of his business friends—as one inquired as to the health of an elderly person.

"I don't know," answered Don.

"You don't mean to say you've cut out business?" exclaimed Wadsworth.

"I guess I have," Don answered vaguely.

"Think of retiring?"

"To tell the truth, I hadn't thought of it until very lately; but now—"

Don restrained a desire to read his letter through once more.

"Take my advice and do it," nodded Wadsworth. "Nothing in it but a beastly grind. It's pulling on you."

As a matter of fact, Don had lost some five pounds in the last month, and it showed in his face. But it was not business which had done that, and he knew it. And Miss Winthrop knew it.

It was certainly white of her to take the trouble to write to him like this. He wondered why she did. She had not been very much in his thoughts of late, and he took it for granted that to the same degree he had been absent from hers. And here she had been keeping count of every time he came in late. Curious that she should have done that!

IN the library, he took out the letter and read it through again. Heavens, he could not allow himself to be discharged like an unfaithful office-boy! His father would turn in his grave. It would be almost as bad as being discharged for dishonesty.

Don's lips came together in thin lines. This would never do—never in the world. As Miss Winthrop suggested, he had much better resign. Perhaps he ought to resign, anyway. No matter what he might do in the future, he could not redeem the past; and if Farnsworth felt he had not been playing the game right, he ought to take the matter in his own hands and get off the team. But, in a way, that would be quit-

ON the death of his father, young Donald Pendleton finds that by the terms of the will the whole of the estate is tied up in trust. The only thing bequeathed to him is his father's house and its maintenance. He accepts the offer of his father's executor to get him a \$25-a-week job in the banking house of Carter, Rand & Seagraves, and reports for work immediately. Going into a dairy lunch to spend his last thirteen cents for food, he finds himself sitting next to the firm's stenographer, Miss Sarah Winthrop. She insists on lending him two dollars until pay-day. He calls on his fiancée, Frances, the daughter of a millionaire, that evening and tells her his day's experiences. She admonishes him to hurry and make his fortune, so they can be married in the spring. In the days that follow Donald usually lunches with Miss Winthrop, who advises him to give up society if he wants to be a business success. Donald finds it impossible to break engagements made for him by his fiancée, who doesn't understand business. Miss Winthrop decides that Don's friendly attentions must be stopped to avoid office gossip, and she finds a new lunching-place. Donald misses her friendly advice, and, since they can not talk things over in the office, prevails on her to go to dinner with him one evening, when he tells how much he has been learning about stocks and bonds. As the season advances, Donald's fiancée finds it more and more embarrassing to make excuses for his absence at the houses of their set, and she remonstrates with him, winning him over to a round of festivities. This tells in bad work at the office. One day Miss Winthrop hears Seagraves talking Don over with his manager. She writes Don a letter of warning and sends it to his club.

ting—and the Pendletons had never been quitters. It would be quitting, both inside the office and out. He had to have that salary to live on. Without it, life would become a very serious matter. The more he thought of this, the more he realized that resigning was out of the question. He really had no alternative but to make good; so he would make good.

The resolution, in itself, was enough to brace him. The important thing now was, not to make Carter, Rand & Seagraves understand this, not to make Farnsworth understand this: it was to make Miss Winthrop understand it. He seized a pen and began to write.

My dear Sarah K. Winthrop [he began]. Farnsworth ought to be sitting at your desk plugging that machine, and you ought to be holding down his chair before the roll-

top desk. You'd get more work out of every man in the office in a week than he does in a month. Maybe he knows more about bonds than you do, but he doesn't know as much about men. If he did he'd have waded into me just the way you did.

I'm not saying Farnsworth hasn't good cause to fire me. He has, and that's just what you've made clear. But, honest and hope to die, I didn't realize it until I read your letter. I knew I'd been getting in late and all that; but, as long as it didn't seem to make any difference to any one, I couldn't see the harm in it. I'd probably have kept on doing it if you hadn't warned me. And I'd have been fired, and deserved it.

If that had happened I think my father would have risen from his grave long enough to come back and disown me. He was the sort of man I have a notion you'd have liked. He'd be down to the office before the doors were open, and he'd stay until some one put him out. I guess he was born that way. But I don't believe he ever stayed up after ten o'clock at night in his life. Maybe there wasn't as much doing in New York after ten in those days as there is now.

I don't want to make any excuses, but, true as you're living, if I turned in at ten I might just as well set up business in the Fiji Islands. It's about that time the evening really begins. How do you work it yourself? I wish you'd tell me how you got in on time, looking fresh as a daisy. And what sort of an alarm-clock do you use? I bought one the other day as big as a snare-drum, and the thing never made a dent. Then I tried having Nora call me, but I only woke up long enough to tell her to get out and went to sleep again. If your system isn't patented I wish you'd tell me what it is. In the meanwhile, I'm going to sit up all night if I can't get up any other way.

Because I'm going to make the office of Carter, Rand & Seagraves on time, beginning to-morrow morning. You watch me. And I'll make up for the time I've overdrawn on lunches by getting back in twenty minutes after this. As for errands—you take the time when Farnsworth sends me out again.

You're dead right in all you said, and if I can't make good in the next few months I won't wait for Farnsworth to fire me—I'll fire myself. But that isn't going to happen. The liveliest man in that office is going to be Yours truly,

DONALD PENDLETON, JR.

Don addressed the letter to the office, mailed it, and went home to dress. But before going upstairs he called Nora.

"Nora," he said. "You know that I'm in business now?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you wouldn't like to see me fired, would you?"

"Oh, Lord, sir!" gasped Nora.

"Then you get me up to-morrow morning at seven

Continued on page 13



"They had lunched together every day, but he had not ventured to suggest this meeting; the only successful way, he knew, was to surprise her and capture her. She glanced about uneasily as he joined her. 'Please,' she said, 'we mustn't stand here.' She was thinking of what Blake would say."